

**COUNCIL SUMMARY BACKGROUND BRIEFING:  
KING COUNTY REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND OTHER ISSUES  
September 2013**

This briefing summarizes recent actions taken by the three regional committees formed as a result of the merge of King County and Metro. The three regional committees are the Regional Policy Committee, the Regional Water Quality Committee, and the Regional Transit Committee. We will also include updates on the King County Flood Control Zone District and the King County wastewater rate increase in this section. This is intended as a summary briefing; staff can provide more details on any of the items below.

**REGIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE (RPC)**

***August 14 meeting summary:***

- **King County Veterans and Human Services Levy 2012 Annual Progress Report.** The RPC approved the annual progress report on the implementation of the King County Veterans and Human Services Levy service improvement plan. In 2011, King County voters renewed the levy, which provides approximately \$15-\$18 million per year for six years starting in 2012. Fifty percent of the levy proceeds is dedicated to services for veterans, military personnel and their families and fifty percent is dedicated to improving health, human services and housing for a wider array of people in need. Bellevue resident and former Human Services Commission member, Douglas Hoople, chaired the Veterans Levy Oversight Board in 2012. Overall, 10% of the people served by levy strategies were residents of East King County.

More Information can be found at: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/DCHS/Services/Levy.aspx>

- **Status Report on review of Solid Waste Transfer and Management Plan.** King County Solid Waste Division staff presented two updates to the Committee – one on August 14 and one on September 11. Please see Council briefing “Regional Solid Waste Management - Update on King County Transfer Station Review” in tonight’s Regional Issues Packet for details.

***September 11 meeting summary:***

- **Overview of Seattle’s Safe Parking Program – “Road to Housing.”** The RPC was briefed on City of Seattle’s pilot Safe Parking Program modeled after programs in San Diego and Portland. The program provides a safe parking environment and supportive services for transitional homeless people living in their vehicles for overnight stays. The 2013 One Night Count of Homeless found 1,989 unsheltered persons in Seattle, with 631 found sleeping in a car or truck. Seattle’s program uses church parking lots in the Ballard neighborhood and includes funding for case management services and a part-time outreach worker to help move these homeless individuals into stable housing. 31 participants, including individuals and families, were served by the program in 2012. 20 entered more stable housing, e.g. transitional housing, permanent housing, moved in with friends/family, etc., and eight were still housed after six months. The remaining 12 have not reached the six-month check in

point. Seven participants were still in the program at the end of 2012 and four left or were asked to leave the program. Of the 31 served in 2012, 35% gave a last permanent address in Seattle, 23% gave an address in King County outside Seattle, 10% gave an address in Washington State outside King County and 19% gave an address outside Washington State.

Seattle would like to expand the Safe Parking Program across Seattle and with regional partners by December 31, 2014. There are currently two safe parking programs for homeless people on the Eastside. A vehicle camp for families is located at Lake Washington United Methodist Church in Kirkland, and a single men's car camp is open at Washington Cathedral in Redmond. Starting in Fall 2013, The Sophia Way will operate a safe parking program at St. Luke's Lutheran Church for all homeless women who need to stay overnight in their cars in the safety of the church's parking lot. These clients go through the same intake process as shelter clients. According to the agency, this option can provide a crucial bridge between homelessness and housing for some women. More information can be found at: <http://www.seattle.gov/council/obrien/news/2012/2012-08.htm#1>

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#### **REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMITTEE (RTC)**

A summary of the September 18 RTC meeting will be included in the October Regional Issues packet. The next meeting of the RTC is scheduled for October 16.

#### **REGIONAL WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE (RWQC)**

##### ***September 4 meeting summary:***

- **Scope of Work for Water Quality Assessment and Monitoring Study.** The ordinance that approved the County's long-term combined sewer overflow (CSO) control plan also authorized the Executive to implement a water quality and monitoring study. The study is intended to provide information on how CSO control projects integrate with other water quality projects, identify opportunities to lower the cost of CSO control, evaluate the effectiveness of emerging technologies, and build a foundation for conducting post-construction monitoring of CSO control projects. Recommendations that emerge from the assessment may include changes in the sequencing and prioritization of CSO projects.

RWQC Committee members from Bellevue and the Sound Cities Association (SCA) expressed concerns regarding the broad description and lack of details about the study, as well as the overall cost. Amendments to the motion approving the scope of work for the study were proposed that addressed the concerns raised. The amendments emphasized that the primary focus of the scope of work shall be CSO program review, included more detailed information about the scope tasks, provided for an annual briefing to RWQC about study costs and benefits, and reduced the overall estimated range of costs for the study from between \$2-5 million to \$2-3 million. The scope of work was approved with the recommended amendments.

The SCA also proposed the addition of a cost-benefit analysis as a separate study to provide data and evaluation of the best investments that should be made through the CSO plan to achieve the required water quality standards by 2030. This item is going to be considered as a potential work item addition for RWQC for 2014.

- **King County Capacity Charge Review.** As you will recall, the RWQC met on July 3 and received a full briefing on the King County Financial Policies Work Group (FPWG) reports on the wastewater capacity charge. The FPWG was established by the RWQC to review a number of policies in the Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP), including the policy regarding the capacity charge. The FPWG was unable to come to consensus regarding changes to the capacity charge, so the RWQC was provided with two presentations - one from the "majority report" group (consisting of staff from King County, suburban cities and Bellevue); and the other from the "minority report" group (Seattle and the wastewater districts). The groups differed on how to allocate costs associated with available capacity in facilities completed before 2003, temporary use of capacity in facilities, and debt service on new facilities that are expected to have available capacity in 2030. The changes suggested by Seattle and the Districts would add at least \$15 a month to the capacity charge (currently at about \$55 per month for 15 years). The Bellevue City Council received a briefing on the work of the FPWG on May 28, 2013 and expressed support at that time for the "majority report" position which would keep the current capacity charge methodology and not increase the capacity charge.

As requested by some RWQC members at the July meeting, County staff prepared a synopsis of the issues for the Committee in September. The Committee had a brief discussion, but no policy direction was provided. The item will return for additional work by the Committee at a future meeting.

- **Overview of Ocean Acidification and Impacts on Puget Sound.** The briefing was presented by staff from the Department of Ecology and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and provided an overview of ocean acidification as a global issue and how it is impacting Puget Sound and the local economy. In response to the threat posed by ocean acidification, former Governor Gregoire created a State Blue Ribbon Panel on the issue. The Panel is still in the early stages of its work, and was tasked with reviewing the current state of knowledge of ocean acidification, identifying research and monitoring needed, developing recommendations to respond to the issue and identify opportunities to improve coordination and enhance public awareness and understanding.

The next meeting of the RWQC is scheduled for Wednesday, October 2.